

South Bottoms Historic District  
Popps-Fries House  
705 South 1st Street  
Lincoln  
Lancaster County  
Nebraska

HABS No. NE-43-B

HABS  
NEB,  
55-LINC,  
6B-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Rocky Mountain Regional Office  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver, Colorado 80225

HABS  
NEB,  
55-LINC,  
6B-

POPP-FRIES HOUSE

Location: 705 South 1st Street, Lincoln,  
Lancaster, Co., Nebraska  
(South Bottoms Historic District)

Present Owner: City of Lincoln

Present Occupant: Vacant

Present Use: Vacant

Statement of  
Significance: The Popp-Fries house is closely  
associated with the predominant Volga-  
German settlement of the South Bottoms  
Historic District. It is an example  
of one of the most popular German-  
Russian house selections from American  
types found in the district and shares  
massing characteristics with the Old  
World forms.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

1. Original and Subsequent Owners: Lots 7 & North 15 5/8  
feet of B, Eaton's Subdivision, City of Lincoln

1888 Plat No. 434 June 8, 1888, Book 2 page 206, Lots 1-12  
Annie J. Eaton & O. W. Eaton  
to  
the public

1888 Deed June 24, 1888, Book 59 page 356, Lots 3-9 (p)10  
Annie J. Eaton & O. W. Eaton  
to  
Lincoln Pottery Co.  
\$10,000

1896 Warranty Deed February 13, 1896, Book 85 page 325  
Lots 3-9 (p)10  
Lincoln Pottery Co. et al  
to  
First National Bank, Lincoln, Nebraska  
\$3,000

1901 Sheriff's Deed May 20, 1901, Book 91 page 579  
Lots 3-9 (p)10  
B. S. Branson, Sheriff  
to  
First National Bank, Lincoln, Nebraska  
\$905  
(Bought at public auction after Pottery Company  
defaulted on payments)

- 1901 Quitclaim Deed June 20, 1901, Book 103 page 301  
Lots 3-9 (p)10  
First National Bank, Lincoln  
to  
Webster Eaton  
\$860
- 1905 Warranty Deed July 31, 1905, Book 127 page 60,  
Lots 7-9 (p)10  
Webster Eaton & Wife (Nellie)  
to  
Frederick Hanneman  
\$487.50
- 1905 Mortgage July 31, 1905, Book 146 page 34, Lots 7-9  
(p)10  
Frederick Hanneman & Wife (Celia)  
to  
Lazard Cahn  
\$350
- 1906 Release Book August 18, 1906, 137 page 614,  
Lots 7-9 (p)10  
Lazard Cahn  
to  
Frederick Hanneman
- 1906 Warranty Deed August 6, 1906, Book 136 page 153  
Lots 7-9 (p)10  
Frederick Hanneman & Wife (Celia)  
to  
Henry Scharton  
\$825
- 1906 Warranty Deed August 6, 1906, Book 136 page 153  
Lots 7-9 (p)10  
Henry Scharton & Wife (Mary)  
to  
Christian Popp  
\$413
- 1913 Decree March 12, 1913, Book R page 571, Lots 7  
(p) 8  
Christian Popp et all  
to  
Chicago Burlington & Quincy Railroad  
\$175  
"Lot seven and the north fifteen and five-eighths of  
lot eight in Eaton's Subdivision, an addition to the  
City of Lincoln, Nebraska, was permanently damaged  
within the meaning of the provisions of the  
constitution providing that property should not be  
taken or damaged without just compensation. . ."

- 1920 Relinquish of Claim November 19, 1920, Book Y page 138  
Lots 7 (p)8  
Catherine Popp (widow)  
to  
Chicago Burlington & Quincy Railroad  
General Improvement made and completed
- 1922 Warranty Deed March 23, 1922, Book 234 page 316  
Lots 7 (p)8  
Katherine E. Popp  
to  
John Fries  
\$975
- 1922 Mortgage March 17, 1922, Book 253 page 330, Lots 7 (p)8  
John Fries & Wife (Katie)  
to  
Katherine Popp et al  
\$700
- 1924 Release Book 282 page 136, Lots 7 (p)8  
Recorded June 3, 1924  
Alexander Popp et al  
to  
John J. Fries
- 1924 Mortgage May 22, 1924, Book 281 page 162 Lots 7 (p)8  
John Fries & Wife (Katie)  
to  
Henry J. Amen  
\$515
- 1928 Mortgage February 21, 1928, Book 319 page 117  
Lots 7 (p)8  
John J. Fries & Wife (Katie)  
to  
Henry J. Amen  
\$900
- 1933 Warranty Deed May 15, 1933, Book 295 page 576  
Lots 7 (p)8  
John Fries & Wife (Katie)  
to  
Henry J. Amen  
\$1 plus other valuable consideration  
Unpaid taxes and debts
- 1935 Warranty Deed December 16, 1935, Book 308 page 142  
Lots 7 (p)8  
Henry J. Amen & Wife (Barbara)  
to  
Mary Moreland  
\$850
- 1940 Mortgage January 22, 1940, Book 393 page 587

Lots 7 (p)8  
Mrs. Mary Moreland  
to  
State Securities Co.  
\$180

1941 Release Book 417 page 31 Lot 7 (p)8  
Recorded July 19, 1941  
State Securities Co.  
to  
Mrs. Mary Moreland

1943 Quitclaim Deed May 31, 1943, Book 358 page 98  
Lots 7 (p)8  
Wesley E. Moreland  
to  
Lydia Sharpnark  
\$1

1945 Quitclaim Deed May 1, 1945, Book 352 page 535  
Lots 7 (p)8  
William L. Young  
to  
Mildred Young  
\$1 Love and Affection

1945 Quitclaim Deed May 26, 1945, Book 352 page 534  
Lots 7 (p)8  
Mildred Young  
to  
Lydia Sharpnark  
\$1

1945 Warranty Deed May 31, 1945, Book 355 page 535  
Lots 7 (p)8  
Lydia Sharpnark & Husband (Roger)  
to  
Anna Miller & Lydia Miller  
\$1,000

1948 Quitclaim Deed August 1, 1948, Book 419 page 143  
Lots 7 (p)8  
Anna Miller  
to  
Lydia Miller  
\$1 plus other consideration

1954 Affidavit Book 51 Page 348, Lots 7 (p)8  
Recorded April 23, 1954  
Lydia Miller as to possession

1954 Quitclaim Deed March 17, 1954, Book 508 page 653  
Lots 7 (p)8  
William T. Young & Wife (Mildred)  
to

- Lydia Miller  
\$1 plus other valuable consideration
- 1954      Warranty Deed April 21, 1954, Book 508 page 655  
          Lots 7 (p)8  
          Lydia Miller Wimberly  
          to  
          George Maser Jr. & Wife (Aryilla)  
          \$1 plus other valuable consideration
- 1955      Mortgage July 25, 1955, Book 667 page 569  
          Lots 7 (p)8  
          George Maser Jr. & Wife (Aryilla)  
          to  
          First National Bank  
          \$3,000
- 1959      Release Book 750 page 331, Lots 7 (p)8  
          Recorded February 26, 1959  
          First National Bank of Lincoln  
          to  
          George Maser
- 1968      Certificate September 6, 1968, Book 722 page 581  
          Lots 7 (p)8  
          Lancaster County Construction  
          to  
          Est. Aruilla Lillian Maser
- 1973      Warranty Deed November 28, 1973, Book 74 page 243,  
          Lots 7 (p)8  
          George Maser Jr. & Wife  
          to  
          Jimmy Lee Kage & Wife (Linda L.)  
          \$1 plus other valuable consideration
- 1976      Mortgage July 9, 1976, Book 76 page 159986  
          Lots 7 (p)8  
          Jimmy Kage & Wife (Linda L.)  
          to  
          Commonwealth Co.  
          \$3,344.27
- 1977      Quitclaim Deed October 13, 1977, Book 78 page 8574  
          Lots 7 (p)8  
          Jimmy Kage  
          to  
          Commonwealth Savings Co.  
          \$1 plus other valuable goods
- 1977      Quitclaim Deed October 13, 1977, Book 78 page 8575  
          Lots 7 (p)8  
          Linda Kage  
          to  
          Commonwealth Savings Co.

\$1 plus other valuable goods

1978      Warranty Deed November 30, 1978, Book 78 page 9022  
          Lots 7 (p)8  
          Commonwealth Savings Co.  
          to  
          Howard W. Lehl & Patricia R.  
          \$1 plus other valuable consideration

1978      Mortgage November 30, 1978 Book 78 page 8576  
          Lots 7 (p)8  
          Howard W. Lehl & Patricia R.  
          to  
          Commonwealth Savings Co.  
          &7,000

1978      Mortgage August 25, 1978, Book 78 page 22581  
          Lots 7-9 (p)10  
          Howard W. Lehl & Wife  
          to  
          Eagle State Bank  
          \$10,000

1978      Release October 3, 1978, Book 78 page 26468,  
          Lots 7-9 (p)10  
  
          Eagle State Bank  
          to  
          Howard W. Lehl & Wife

1982      Mechanical Lien February 12, 1982, Book 82 page 2009,  
          Lots 7 (p)8  
          Taylor's Drain & Sewer  
          to  
          Howard Lehl et al (Steve Lehl)  
          \$69.47  
          October 12, 1981 cabled sewer line from house at  
          705 South 1st  
          Lincoln to city sewer

1986      Warranty Deed March 25, 1986, Book 86 page 25179  
          Lots 7-9 (p)10  
          Howard W. Lehl & Patricia Lehl  
          to  
          City of Lincoln  
          \$14,500

1986      Release April 9, 1986, Book 86 page 25181  
          Lots 7 (p)8  
          Nebraska Department of Banking  
          to  
          Howard W. Lehl & Patricia R. Lehl

2. Date of Erection: Before 1910.

3. Alterations and Additions: The house is believed to have been originally located at 112 H Street and moved to the present site prior to 1910 to make way for the new Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad main line. A 1927 Sanborn map reveals a rectangular notch in the northeast corner of the plan. A porch is shown extending across the front of the house, turning the northeast corner and terminating at the west wall of the notch. This may indicate that the original plan of the core consisted of a tier of two bedrooms on the south and a dining/living room in the northwest quadrant. Consequently, the main entrance would have been located back from the street thus providing access in a modified version of Old World tradition. To date the evidence does not clarify this phase of the building evolution. However, sometime after 1933, the north side of the porch was removed, an extra room was added and the entrance was shifted to the front facade.

Architectural evidence (construction materials and techniques, joint details and differing roof configurations) indicates that the kitchen and bathroom were added to the rear of the main core. It is quite possible that the chamber adjacent to the kitchen was originally a storage area which was later converted (c.1953) to a bathroom.

Originally, the exterior walls of the main core were sheathed with car siding and enframed with corner pilaster boards and wide-board cornices. The pilaster and cornice boards were removed when the walls were covered with the existing asphalt composition siding. The walls of the kitchen wing were originally sheathed with clapboards and enframed with corner pilaster boards.

Interior alterations, in addition to those mentioned above, include covering the original lath and plaster walls of the formal and informal parlors with plywood paneling. The ceiling of the informal parlor has been covered with acoustical tile. Most of the wood trim throughout the house, with the exception of the kitchen, has been altered.

4. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Structure: Christian Popp purchased the property in 1906 and it is probable that the house was moved to its present site the same year.

The Lincoln City Directory and 1910 Census list the families of John C. Spomer and George Beideck as renters in the house. Both men worked as laborers for the Chicago, Quincy and Burlington Railroad. The families immigrated from Russia in 1907.

In 1913 the Fink and Gei families plus a boarder rented the house. All had immigrated from Russia a short time earlier. Two men were laborers for the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad and one was a laborer working for the city. All three men had served 3-4 years in the Russian army.



Christian Popp rented the property to various German-Russian families until he sold the house to John Fries in 1922. Fries lived with his family at the residence until 1933 when he lost the home due to unpaid taxes and moved further west to work in the beet fields.

Subsequent owners have both resided at and rented out the house.

#### ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

1. Architectural Interest and Merit: The Popp-Fries house belongs to a family of German-Russian house types which displays the most explicit of Old World architectural characteristics including a rectangular plan shape with its narrow dimension facing the street. This family of types includes the largest number (59%) of houses in the South Bottoms Historic District.

2. Condition of the Fabric: Poor (to be demolished).

3. Summary Description: The Popp-Fries house is a one-story rectangular mass measuring approximately six by eight and one half meters, covered by a truncated hipped roof. Extending from the rear (west) of the core is a wing covered with a shed roof. The entire house rests on a slightly raised foundation.

4. Description of Exterior: The main body of the house is oriented longitudinally, the shorter dimension forming the front (east) facade. This facade is an asymmetrical, three bay composition with a central door. A shed-roofed porch, extending across the full facade, is supported by four turned columns. Markings on the base of the columns and porch floor indicate that the porch was originally bounded by railings. The east elevation is further enhanced by a symmetrically-placed gablet with rather elaborate cornice detailing.

Exterior walls are sheathed with ashlar pattern asphalt composition siding. The wall of the gablet is surfaced with a diamond pattern of wood shingles. A symmetrically-placed plywood panel covers a rough opening of unknown function and design. Window and door openings are enframed with plain wood trim. Windows are double-hung single pane wood sash.

Structurally, the house is of simple wood frame construction. Foundations are rubble sandstone and limestone from footing to sill, plastered on the exterior with concrete and incised to resemble stone.

5. Description of Interior: Only a crawl space exists under the main core of the house. The area beneath the south one-half of the wing has been excavated to a low room height.

The main level of the core is subdivided into four rooms of unequal size. A formal parlor and informal living/dining room

are located on the north. Two bedrooms are situated on the south. The wing extending from the rear (west) contains a kitchen and small chamber currently serving as a bathroom. From this room a door in the floor provides access via a steep stair to a small basement storage space. Regular door openings provide access between rooms, except between the formal and informal parlors where a wide opening provides access.

6. Orientation, Setting and Outbuildings: The house is located in the northwest portion of the South Bottoms Historic District and faces east on South 1st Street. The property is bounded by the Goldstein-Kahem-Knaub house (documentation included) on the north, a vacant lot on the west and the Henry Scharton house (documentation included) on the south.

None of the outbuildings originally occupying the site currently exist. The 1927 Sanborn map shows a summer kitchen located immediately behind the house. Other outbuildings included a barn and garage at the rear of the site.

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

##### Interviews:

Hansle, Helen (1924-1932 at 705 South First), daughter of John Fries. Personal conversation with Anne Schafer, July 1986.

##### Records:

Building Permits, Building Permits and Inspections Administration, City of Lincoln, Nebraska.

Lancaster County Assessment Books and Tax Lists 1905-1929, County Assessor's Office, Lincoln, Nebraska and State Archives, Nebraska State Historical Society.

Murphy, Dave and Kathleen Fimple, "South Bottoms Historic District, Lincoln, Nebraska", National Register of Historic Places - Inventory Nomination Form. Lincoln, Nebraska: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1986.

Polk's Lincoln City Directory, Lincoln, Nebraska: Polk-McAvoy, 1908 - .

Records of Deeds, Clerk of the County Court, Lancaster County, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Sanborn Map Company, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Lincoln, Nebraska. New York: Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, 1903, 1927.

US Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29 (Lancaster County), 624, Roll 849-B50. Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910.

Williams, Hattie Plum and Jacob J. Stroh, "Census of the

German-Russian Population, Lincoln, Nebraska". State Archives,  
Nebraska State Historical Society, Micro.#7369.

Prepared by: H. Keith Sawyers  
Professor of Architecture  
College of Architecture  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Anne Schafer  
Historian (Intern)  
Nebraska State Historical Society

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